Executive Proclamation

State of South Dakota
Office of the Governor

Whereas, The citizens of South Dakota stand firmly committed to quality after school programs and opportunities; and,

Whereas, After school programs provide safe, challenging, engaging and fun learning experiences to help children and youth develop their social, emotional, physical, cultural and academic skills and provide support for working families by ensuring their children are safe and productive after the regular school day ends; and,

Whereas, After school programs build stronger communities by involving our students, parents, business leaders and adult volunteers in the lives of our young people, thereby promoting positive relationships among children, youth, families and adults and engages families, schools and diverse community partners in advancing the welfare of our children; and,

Whereas, South Dakota has provided significant leadership in the area of community involvement in the education and well-being of our youth, grounded in the principle that quality after school programs are key to helping our children become successful adults; and,

Whereas, On October 14, *Lights On Afterschool,* a national celebration of after school programs, will promote the critical importance of quality after school programs in the lives of children, their families and their communities; and,

Whereas, More than 28 million children in the United States have parents who work outside the home and 14.3 million children have no place to go after school; and,

Whereas, Many after school programs across the country are facing funding shortfalls so severe that they are being forced to close their doors and turn off their lights:

Now, Therefore, I, M. Michael Rounds, Governor of the state of South Dakota, do hereby proclaim October 14, 2004, as

LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL DAY

in South Dakota, and I urge parents, elected officials, and community members to recognize the importance of after school programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the state of South Dakota, in Pierre, the Capital City, this Twenty-eighth Day of September in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Four.

M. Michael Rounds, Governor

Attest:

Chris Nelson, Secretary of State